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**PUBLICLY-LED PROACTIVE
AND PRIVATELY-LED REACTIVE PLANNING**
A COMPARISON OF COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT APPROACHES
BETWEEN EAST BAYFRONT AND KING-LIBERTY VILLAGE

by

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A Major Research Paper
presented to Ryerson University

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in
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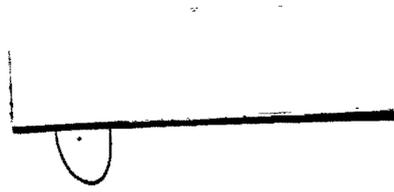
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ABSTRACT

This research examines two sites in downtown Toronto undergoing large-scale comprehensive brownfield redevelopment schemes. While city agencies helped to spur initial investment in King-Liberty Village, most changes have been privately-led while the planning department has attempted to incrementally guide development and the inclusion of specific public amenities. Waterfront Toronto's planning of East Bayfront is seen as a strategic public investment and has undergone proactive policy-led planning. These differing frameworks have resulted in contrasting outcomes. While the planning and development framework of the latter has created the conditions for a neighbourhood well-served by transit and more robust parkland, affordable housing and sustainability goals, it has required enormous public investment. The process in King-Liberty Village is more indicative of the challenges facing other private redevelopments that often require greater public planning resources than are available to ensure Toronto's continued growth is sufficiently accommodated.

Key Words:

King-Liberty Village, East Bayfront, Waterfront Toronto, redevelopment, brownfield

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1 Introduction

There are numerous actors and interests that influence how urban sites are planned and developed from land owners, developers, urban planners, politicians and citizens to economic and market factors. Yet these various forces are often diluted into two spheres: the private, with primary goals of designing and constructing profitable projects, and the public, which aims to guide development to incorporate certain elements deemed to be in the public interest. However, the interplay between these two forces is complex and the various frameworks under which they operate result in varying primary goals. These differing priorities regularly make for a complicated process of negotiation and manifest themselves in different standards of built form and levels of inclusion of public amenities that make for more or less successful urban spaces.

Large-scale brownfield redevelopment projects, such as those examined in this research, often present unique opportunities to provide substantial additions to the urban landscape. They can comprehensively plan and reintegrate sizable parcels of land back into the fabric of the surrounding city and guide the suitable placement of key community elements. Thorough comprehensive plans can provide the necessary foundation of a well thought out approach to complex urban sites requiring many layers of integrated solutions to land use, transportation, affordable housing options and, increasingly, environmental sustainability initiatives.

Yet there are a host of circumstances that dictate the possibilities and limitations surrounding how these projects are planned, developed and ultimately inhabited and used by citizens. Land ownership titles, planning framework and devoted resources, developer vision and priorities, market conditions and political leadership all play significant roles, albeit to varying degrees within each project.

Privately-led, entrepreneurial planning tends to be more beholden to market conditions, development timelines and profits and often at the expense of cohesive neighbourhoods and public amenity (Fainstein, 2003). Publically-led proactive planning, on the other hand, can be a much more intensive process requiring robust public resources but tends to create more predictable and well-serviced urban neighbourhoods. As this city's population continues to quickly expand into the foreseeable future and provincial policies encourage intensification of built form and increasingly on reclaimed lands, opportunities for these sorts of redevelopment projects will likely increase.

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this research is to explore and compare the urban planning and development approaches undertaken on two comparable brownfield sites currently under redevelopment: King-Liberty Village and East Bayfront. Both sites shoulder Toronto's downtown core (see Fig. 1) and are therefore located on lands that present prime opportunities to comply with residential and employment intensification targets as set out in Ontario's *Places To Grow Act* (2006) and the City of Toronto's *Official Plan* (2007). Both are brownfield sites that have hosted a variety of industry throughout their histories and have consequently required remediation and large-scale infrastructural improvements in advance of development.

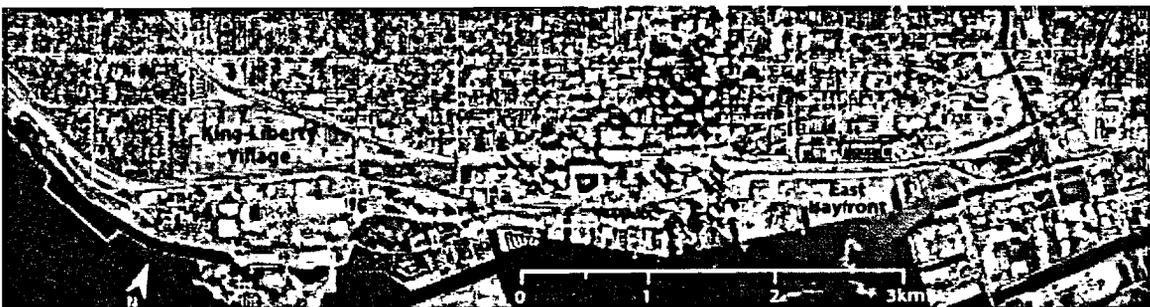


Fig. 1: King-Liberty Village and East Bayfront (Source: <http://maps.google.com>)

While these projects share some similar physical and locational characteristics, the models of comprehensive planning and development that have been employed to realize each vision have been rather different and offered an opportunity to survey two contrasting comprehensive planning approaches. While both projects rely on the public and private sectors for various components of their planning and development, this research explores how the different relationships between these two spheres have determined the roles and influence of each sector and the effects of more reactive or proactive planning approaches. In addition, it examines the degree to which each sector has guided the underlying goals of these redevelopment schemes and how this has translated into built form standards and the inclusion or lack of specific neighbourhood elements.

2 Method

Research was conducted into the history of each site and the factors that led to their becoming available for large-scale redevelopment efforts at roughly the same period of time. This allowed the exploration into the characteristics of the sites that played a major role in determining which planning and development models were able to be adopted and implemented for each. Key elements that comprise a well-functioning and amenity-rich neighbourhood were researched and then examined in each study area to determine their prominence in the local plans and their ongoing integration into the neighbourhood. Relevant reports were retrieved from the City of Toronto's planning department regarding both sites as were the more detailed urban design guidelines and precinct plans that were developed for the projects.

Key informants with both projects were identified and personal interviews conducted. Interview subjects included a public community planner, executive director of a business improvement area, a tenant liaison with a major commercial real estate manager, the ex-chief planner of the City of Toronto and a development analyst with Waterfront Toronto. The interviews were semi-structured and the questions left open-ended so as to encourage elaboration on any points that were of interest. The questions focused on the individual's role within their organization as well as their organization's role within the redevelopment of the sites under examination. The interviews explored how each participant viewed their role within the planning/redevelopment process as well as the goals they set and tools they used in attempts to reach them. Each was encouraged each to elaborate on the challenges they faced and what changes to the planning/development framework in Ontario may have been beneficial to them. Interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed. Findings from these interviews were then incorporated into the research uncovered from related publications, articles and planning documents.

3 Literature Review

3.1 The Role of Planning

In the ongoing evolution of our cities, the practice of urban planning aims to exert its influence on the built form in the name of the public interest. There are, however, many players on this stage with whom planners must share the levers of change. Developers, landowners, politicians and the many publics that redevelopment efforts throughout the city will impact. In this sense planning serves the function of balancing public and private interests during this process.

While the general notion of “planning” our urban concentrations dates as far back as ancient Greece, the modern-day land use planning system is a relatively new framework which determines who the players are in the process of shaping our man-made environments (Keeping, Ratcliffe & Stubbs, 2009). But contrary to its professional title, urban planning does not control this process. It must constantly negotiate the interests and rights of all parties involved and impacted development projects and it must do so within the limits of the authority granted legally for its role in this ongoing process. In this province these legal powers stem from the provincial legislation contained within the *Ontario Planning Act*.

Urban planning is often defined as a form of state intervention in a land development process that tends to be dominated by many private sector players (Adams, 1994). The question is, then, when is the appropriate time and what are the appropriate methods used to intervene? An understanding of the consequences of land use planning decisions is necessary, as is an understanding of who will be impacted and to what degree. As the profession of urban planning expands its understanding of the complex interdependency of the physical, social and economic pillars that support healthy communities, it continues its attempts to reach out to a greater number of publics and give them a voice in the planning

process (Levy, 2008). And since planning decisions can and usually do alter pure market decisions related to land use, its effects cause some people to gain and others to lose making it an inherently political activity (Adams, 1994).

3.2 Comprehensive Planning

One of the first modern attempts at planning a new city as a whole can be traced back to the Garden City movement introduced by Ebenezer Howard in the late 19th century. Another was the modernist-influenced idea of Frank Lloyd Wright's Broadacre City imagined in the towers-in-the-park ideal. Daniel Burnham's City Beautiful Movement of the same era aimed to improve cities' built form and physical beauty through the incorporation of grand buildings, landscaped avenues, monuments and lagoons in the formal Baroque fashion. Many of these first incarnations of comprehensive urban planning were in reaction to the often squalid conditions of many cities at the end of the industrial revolution (Hodge, 2003). They aimed to exert a new control over our man-made environments that focused primarily on improving health and sanitation. Just as today much of our planning system and guiding policies aim to create more sustainable environments of habitation as a reaction to the increasing environmental degradation (Keeping, Ratcliffe & Stubbs, 2009).

Such plans tended to be utopian in vision and rational in structure and they often attempted to design cities from a relative blank slate. They laid out grand plans for ideal cities that would be constructed on undeveloped lands as opposed to building upon the frameworks of existing cities. As a result, many of these first comprehensive plans, of which the Garden City ideal typified, were never realized. What many of them seemed to ignore in assessing the possibility of their realization is that the massive amount of time and investment that is required to design, build and service urban centres relies heavily on the economic resources

that already exist within those that are already built (Adams, 1994) and remained somewhat divorced from the realistic way in which cities tend to redevelop incrementally.

Such proposals often confused a singular vision for an urban centre with that of a truly comprehensive plan. They often assumed a capacity for central coordination that rarely exists in actual fact (Friedman, 1971). Today's ideas of a comprehensive urban or community plan differs substantially. They tend to be long-range in nature, often 20 years or more, and aim to balance over that time the overall physical development of the community or neighbourhood, depending on the scale. They aim to collaboratively organize and direct the social, economic and political forces in a rational and productive manner (Hodge, 2003). A well-prepared comprehensive plan operating under a supportive legislative and operational framework can work to more predictably and equitably guide both public and private development efforts and ensure the inclusion of neighbourhood elements such as transit, public spaces and diverse populations that make for more successful urban communities (Calthorpe and Fulton, 2001).

The basic building blocks of such comprehensive plans include the elements that comprise an interdependently functioning urban space (Levy, 2008). The transportation armature of the district is often the foundation upon which the placement and orientation of land uses can be determined. Infrastructural necessities such as sewer and water systems that are needed to adequately support the activity above them are included as well. The three-dimensional character, or urban design principles, of the built form is determined to varying degrees depending on the amount of control the planning authority wishes or is permitted to exercise. In its essence, a comprehensive plan examines the fundamental elements of a locale and determines how best to maximize each one of those goals over time (Hodge, 2003).

3.3 The Planning and Development Framework

Urban planning and the regulatory framework operate in tandem to realize set goals. The former to set the long-term objectives for a given development and the latter to provide compliance with those objectives (ibid, 2003). Such plans, however, leave much in the room of regulatory interpretation no matter how comprehensive and detailed and can only ensure so much. They often work imperfectly even under ideal planning circumstances, if such an environment exists. There are many participants with complex relationships that it is very difficult to embark on a large-scale comprehensive planning exercise and expect to leave little to chance. But many of the outcomes that people assume are derived from good planning forethought are often equally, if not moreso, the result of strong democratic governance and effective regulation (Hopkins, 2001). Indeed, these can be considered pillars of a potent urban planning and development process. Recent trends in planning goals and regulation are moving toward a more traditional form of dense, mixed-use templates that incorporate a variety of uses and, increasingly, more sustainable development patterns (Calthorpe, 2001).

Urban land regulation has been looked at as not only a means by which to exert some control over growth but also as something that from which the local government may profit. Some have argued that planning has become less about the city-building and adhering to a master plan and more concerned with negotiating with private land owners and developers (Hopkins, 2001). Scant resources, both financial and human, have in many cases altered the priorities of planning departments from determining needs assessments and comprehensive plan components to this bargaining process (Fanstein, 1989). In rapidly-growing Toronto they are too-often ill-equipped to deal with the sheer number of development applications let alone prepare a truly comprehensive plan for a neighbourhood that is under intense development pressures (Markowiak, 2010).

However, some districts have greater political and financial resources at their disposal which allow them to develop more ambitious goals and more closely adhere to the planning guidelines set out in their comprehensive or precinct plan. One with more planning resources and greater development pressures will often be in a far better position to make the investments in public infrastructure that support the plan. Due to increased competition to develop land within these districts they also have greater leeway to reject those proposals that don't reflect the ambitions set out in the plan (Levy, 2008). As this research examines, some plans, such as those for the East Bayfront, have far greater resources made available to them which can make for a more robust comprehensive approach and greater control over eventual execution.

There are a variety of players in every development project. And distinct interests can often be attributed to each of the actors in this process. The developer, above all, is an entrepreneur. Someone who can identify a market for a particular real estate product, determines how to bring that product to market and is willing to take the risk to do so (Keeping, Ratcliffe & Stubbs, 2009). Private land also tend to be put into the most profitable use since the overriding criterion for private development is profitability (Kirk, 1980). Planners need to understand this fact otherwise community plans will tend not to shape market behaviour, but be shaped by it (Adams, 1994).

But all actors—landowners, developers, planners, politicians, local business owners and citizens—must work within a given framework in order to facilitate the realization of a project. As the primary goals of developers and planners often differ, developers can equate “planning” with “planning permissions” (Blake and Goland, 2004). Yet while control over this change is held by many often much of the disappointment with the outcome of certain projects falls heavily on planners' shoulders (Kirk, 1980).

3.4 Public Policy and Brownfield Redevelopment

Both redevelopment schemes presented here are located on brownfield sites that once supported industrial uses that have contributed to their contamination and disuse. In the case of King-Liberty the previous Inglis manufacturing plant produced boilers, heavy machinery and household appliances (Wieditz, 2007) while East Bayfront has been home to railway lands and a scattering of light industrial uses. Lands such as these have sat underused as the cost-effectiveness of their redevelopment was often seen as too risky for private developers in addition to a general unwillingness on the part of policymakers to subsidize private property redevelopment (De Souza, 2002).

Policy makers at all levels of government are interested in putting the brownfield sites back into productive use as such projects have the potential to bring a broad range of economic, environmental and social benefits to all parties involved. Ontario's updated Provincial Policy Statement (2005) and relatively new Places to Grow growth plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2006) actively promote the redevelopment of derelict brownfields as their adaptive reuse can both reactivate unproductive land and provide numerous possible locations for intensification to occur. Remediating Toronto's brownfields and recapturing their lost economic contributions to the city and region have been made a priority by the City of Toronto as well in an attempt to unlock the tremendous city-building potential they represent (City of Toronto, 2007b).

Yet there are a host of legal liability, regulatory, economic and planning factors that all come into play when attempting to redevelop potentially contaminated brownfield sites. However, committed public involvement and a strong vision are needed in order for brownfield remediation to be a success (NRTEE, 2003). As such, it should not be assumed that developers will be interested in brownfield sites simply due to the fact that traditional greenfields are becoming less available and more expensive to acquire (Adams and Watkins,

2002). This is due to the fact that redeveloping brownfields require far more expertise and regulatory approval than do standard developments.

The redevelopment of brownfield sites is often supported by the surrounding neighbourhoods as they potentially reap the benefits of improved connections to newly productive areas of the city which often translate into increased property values (Adams and Watkins, 2002). However, developers will only take on the challenges of such sites if the projects provide a satisfactory return on investment. The legal formation of the Greenbelt surrounding Greater Toronto in 2005 has essentially formed an urban growth boundary and has begun to place limits on the continued outward urban expansion into traditional greenfields. This, in conjunction with the region's continued population growth and resilient real estate market, will likely have the effect of creating an upward pressure on raw land prices at the periphery and allow brownfield opportunities to become more cost competitive (De Souza, 2002).

Yet one of the primary problems associated with brownfield redevelopment is that municipal governments in Canada simply do not have the financial resources to either remediate the sites themselves. As a result, local governments can rarely undertake remediation of brownfield sites in urban centres without the involvement of senior governments or private investment (De Souza, 2000). However, continuously rising demand for real estate in central urban areas, especially in central Toronto, and public policy promoting centrally located intensification, has dramatically increased the potential for profit in the redevelopment of such sites into new urban communities. This has created the need to devise more innovative frameworks that prepare these lands for redevelopment as examined in this research.

4 Neighbourhood Element Selection Criteria

There are key local elements that make for more functional, amenity-rich and humane communities. These include well-designed neighbourhoods with varied uses and transportation options, populations diverse in age, background and income and the inclusion of ample public spaces (Calthorpe and Fulton, 2001). These elements do not, however, exist on their own but, rather, form an integrated layer of public services and amenities that define how well a neighbourhood functions and serves those that use it.

A more comprehensive planning approach often allows for these elements to be planned for and designed into a community in the early stages. This can permit a more effective placement within the neighbourhood resulting in better integration and increased use. Such elements can also be added incrementally but require the proper resources and political will. The degree of their inclusion and quality of their implementation in the planning and execution can be used as a metric to gauge their perceived importance within each area. The planning and incorporation of the following key elements into the neighbourhoods under study has been examined.

4.1 Parks and Green Space

Parks give character to a community's physical environment and humanize their development patterns (Hodge, 2003) while vibrant public spaces provide platforms for informal social interactions that help bind a community together (Catungal and Leslie, 2009). Setting ample space aside for recreational purposes should be done at the early stages of comprehensive planning opportunity as the cost of acquiring and possibly assembling land after its value has been increased from previous development upon it will almost certainly be a much more complex and expensive endeavour.

4.2 Transportation and Public Transit

The local street pattern forms the armature of a neighbourhood and becomes an element that tends to last far longer than do the individual buildings situated along them and strongly shapes future uses. In addition, the need for increased public transit options in our cities has become more clear with rising pollution, increased congestion and rising fuel costs. While transit can help to ameliorate these aspects of urban living it also helps to improve access to neighbourhoods and forms connections between them for a far greater spectrum of citizens than the private automobile. Thoughtful planning of their design and placement can allow for a cleaner and more efficient transportation of people and goods and a more democratic system of access to districts of the city. However, these elements occupy a large amount of a district's available land and demand considerable investment for their introduction into a neighbourhood (Hodge, 2003).

4.3 Affordable Housing

One of the most pressing policy issues in large Canadian cities such as Toronto is the high price of housing (Sommerville, 2004). The continued buoyancy of the housing market has made home ownership and the associated financial and social benefits beyond the reach of an increasing number of individuals and families, especially in the downtown core. While the term affordable housing has many definitions attached to it, in principle it aims to achieve a population with a greater mix of household incomes and to avoid the consequences economic ghettoization both at the city-wide and neighbourhood scales.

4.4 Community Consultation

Developing effective plans involves considerable dialogue with the community which plans will directly or indirectly affect. Community consultation and participation is often a complex undertaking of gathering information from disparate populations and stakeholders. While it is a required element of the planning process as prescribed by the Ontario Planning Act, in order to be effective it must be more than a formality in the planning and development process. Collaborative neighborhood planning on issues involving community development offers cities and developers the opportunity to identify and emphasize a variety of goals with the involvement of the local community which will increase the chances of creating a plan for a neighbourhood that will be align with both public policy as well as local priorities (Urban Land Institute, 2005).

4.5 Built Form

The physical shaping of the built environment consists of the placement, density and height of individual buildings. These elements in combination can have a profound impact on both how a neighbourhood functions, feels and relates to the surrounding city (Hodge, 2003). The shape a development takes will affect neighbourhood scale, viewplanes and shadow impacts which tend to be primary concerns in residential or mixed-use locales.

The built form of a given neighbourhood is informed by the Official Plan, Secondary Plan and zoning by-laws as well as a Precinct Plan or Urban Design Guidelines, all of which aim, with varying degrees of detail, to create more predictable and higher standards for future development. Successful built form allows a district to become more than the sum of its individual buildings and form a functioning and visually coherent whole.

5 King-Liberty Village

Once a major central manufacturing district just west of Toronto's downtown core, the privately-owned lands of King-Liberty Village have been experiencing profound changes which have accelerated in recent years. Industrial decline has been replaced with adaptive commercial reuse in areas with a continued employment use designation to the west and, once abandoned, are now home to 400 businesses and over 5000 employees (LVBIA, n.d.). The eastern portion of this district was rezoned in 2000 in order help spur the redevelopment of this brownfield into a mixed-use community combining residential, commercial and office uses (City of Toronto, 2005). Private developers and urban design consultants have since been designing and constructing over 50,000 m² of retail space on the site and in excess of 4000 condominium units which are in the process of housing approximately 10,000 new residents (Wieditz, 2007).

5.1 Orientation

The district of downtown Toronto commonly referred to as Liberty Village is bounded by Dufferin Street to the west, King Street to the north, Strachan Avenue to the east and the railway line to the south. However, this district is actually composed to two distinct neighbourhoods with different zoning by-laws governing their land use and consequently their current development patterns. There is also an inconsistent history of nomenclature for the two areas. These divisions need to be made clear and kept consistent throughout this paper before delving into the districts' histories and the current changes that are occurring within their boundaries.

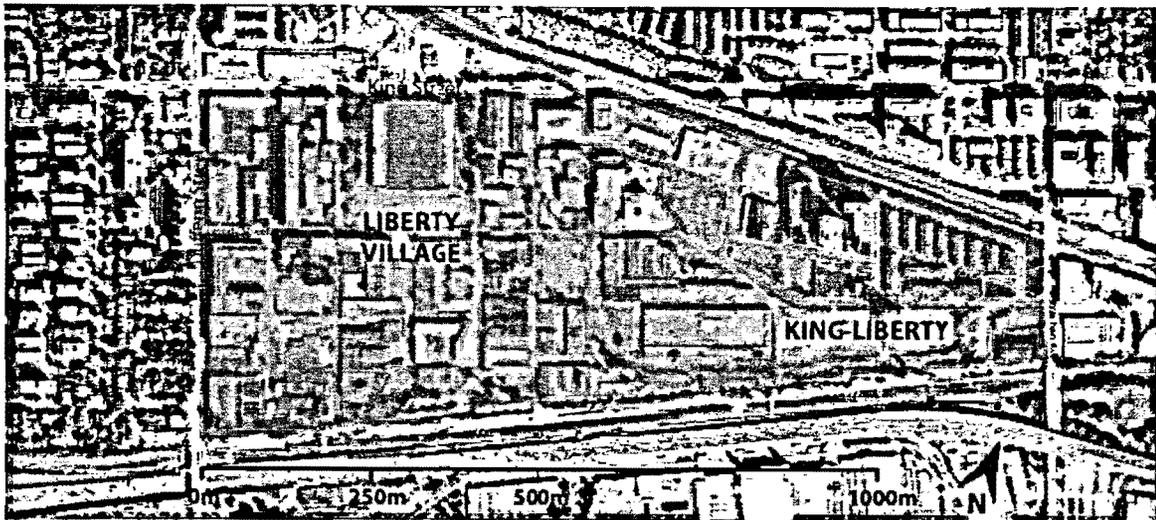


Fig. 2: King Liberty Village: Liberty Village to the west and King-Liberty to the east (Source: <http://maps.google.com>)

The boundary delineating the separation between the employment district and the mixed-use residential area runs diagonally along Hanna Avenue (see Fig. 2). The predominantly commercial lands with an employment area designation lie to the west and, in the City of Toronto's Garrison North Secondary Plan, are referred to as the Hanna Technology District while the land situated to the east currently undergoing intense residential development are referred to as the Inglis Lands. However, upon speaking with planners and local businesses as well as referencing marketing materials, and for the sake of consistency, the employment area to the west will be referred to as Liberty Village while the predominantly residential area to the east will be referred to as King-Liberty and the district as a whole referred to as King-Liberty Village.

5.2 Historical Perspective

King-Liberty Village is located approximately two kilometres west of the Toronto's financial core. Originally home to the Central Prison for Men in the late 1800's, the subsequent

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extension of the railway through this area transformed it into a bustling industrial district. Its role as a manufacturing centre continued well into the 20th century with companies such as General Electric and Inglis Manufacturing operating locally until global economic changes began to reshape the area in the early 1980's (Weiditz, 2007). As witnessed in cities across North America, manufacturing began to leave the urban core for more convenient suburban or cheaper international locations leaving behind unused industrial neighbourhoods (CMHC, 2003). This process of deindustrialization left behind massive tracts of land which remained zoned for employment uses that continued to vacate the area.

5.3 Liberty Village

During this decline, the district remained little used with the exception of abandoned buildings being converted into studio and gallery spaces, some legally, others not (Catungal and Leslie, 2009). The first organized reinvestment in the area came from a collaboration between Artscape, a local not-for-profit development agency that seeks affordable spaces for artists, and TEDCO, the Toronto Economic Development Corporation, the city's arms-length economic development vehicle. The two organizations created several live/work spaces for emerging artists and acted an initial catalyst for investment in the area (Gertler et al, 2006).

As the art community grew and early gentrification took root, so too did small start-up high-tech companies and new media firms which were proliferating in the early 1990's. Such industries were attracted to the large, loft-like heritage buildings and strong urban fabric that maintained an abundance of character while allowing for a variety of creative and adaptive reuses and had the distinct advantage of a prime central location (Catungal and Leslie, 2009). The continued economic boom in creative technology industries furthered commercial growth the Liberty Village area.

By the late 1990's, York Heritage Properties, a commercial real estate owner and manager with specific interest in the adaptive reuse of heritage buildings, was instrumental in taking this nascent gentrification process and solidifying it with its purchase of the Carpet Factory, a 310,000 square foot industrial building covering an entire city block. York Heritage began to upgrade the building for the growing number of commercial tenants in a strategy to attract higher-profile companies to the area. A second privately-operated pioneer in developing Liberty Village's cluster of new media companies was Beanfield Technologies. This firm began as a small scale internet service provider but quickly embarked on wiring the Carpet Factory for high-speed internet connectivity in a bid to provide the new business tenants with the broadband access they increasingly required (Clay, 2010). The City of Toronto has since collaborated with this private firm to help lay the digital infrastructure necessary to solidify Liberty Village's attraction to such industries.

As employment numbers continued to grow and high-technology employment clusters gained recognition as prime economic indicators, Liberty Village began to register with greater importance on the City's radar. In late 1999 with the guidance of the city's Economic Development Division, local businesses and property managers formed the Liberty Village Business Association in order to acquire greater legitimacy and authority in stating priorities of improvements desired in the area as well as to access funding from the city's Employment Revitalization program. Through this program a privately-developed but city-supported Capital Improvement Plan was announced to initiate basic safety improvements in the area including the installment of proper sidewalks on major streets and improved street lighting (City of Toronto, 2006c). The Liberty Village Business Improvement Area (LVBIA) formed in 2001 and worked to further lobby the City for neighbourhood improvements as well as continue raising awareness of the new media sector and branding the area as young, progressive destination with the aim of increasing property values as well as demand for commercial space.

Almost all improvements to the area have been small in scale and incremental in nature. They have also been accomplished through pioneering private enterprises and the collaboration of local business associations and various city departments often after organized lobbying. This exemplifies how first steps in the revitalization of the district were done as a form of public-private partnerships that slowly addressed issues associated with the neighbourhood's regeneration. Economic development was the primary motivation for initial public involvement and infrastructural investment slowly followed. Only relatively recently has the City's planning department executed an Area Study (2006) and begun to consider a comprehensive plan and a possible heritage designation for the neighbourhood.

Liberty Village's critical mass of creative entrepreneurs, digital infrastructure and reasonable rents has been a major selling feature of the area to businesses looking for modern, innovative workspaces (Gertler et al, 2006) and today the neighbourhood is home to over 400 businesses and 5000 employees (LVBIA, n.d.). This regeneration of the commercial portion of the Liberty Village neighbourhood has now spanned over fifteen years and has been hailed as a success from an economic development standpoint (City of Toronto, 2007a) while the cluster of creative economy jobs has resulted in an influx of energy in the area and a relatively young workforce that populates the locale. The successes of the commercial area of this district have been paralleled by increasing development pressures on the King-Liberty lands directly to the east.

5.4 King-Liberty

The closing of the Inglis manufacturing plant in 1989 presented a large-scale development opportunity for both the private developers and the city in the area now known as King-Liberty. The land was purchased and assembled into a 45-acre developable lot by a private

company, the Toronto Land Partnership, that included the president of the development company CanAlfa Group, Walter Jensen (Ryan, 2008). They were then sold to the private firm, IBI Group, whose skills lay in planning, brownfield remediation, infrastructure engineering, obtaining city approvals and the creation of the urban design guidelines directing the built form. IBI then formally retained CanAlfa as the development manager (IBI, 2005) and the two private entities have worked in constant partnership to purchase, design and construct the majority of the King-Liberty Neighbourhood (Ryan, 2008).

During this time the city recognized the potential opportunities available for these lands. Both the city and TEDCO aimed to find a way to realize the lost economic function of the lands and begin a useful repurposing after the departure of the manufacturing uses (Bedford, 2010). The city also saw the opportunity to intensify the land with infill residential units and bolster the municipal tax base on which the city is heavily reliant (Markowiak, 2010). However, this required rezoning the lands from strictly industrial to mixed-use permitting residential, commercial and institutional in addition to light industrial uses.

As the city was consolidating its Official Plan during the amalgamation process of 1999, it became aware of the private development interests in the area and developed a Secondary Plan and Area Specific Policy for the King-Liberty. While the Official Plan aims to provide broad statements concerning general goals for the city's development, this secondary plan aimed to provide a closer examination the King-Liberty lands and develop more detailed direction for land use decisions to follow. This was the first attempt by the city to develop a high level comprehensive approach for the area before private development began in earnest. An Official Plan Amendment was approved in 2000 which formally allowed the conversion of former Inglis Manufacturing lands from employment area uses to that of mixed-use residential (City of Toronto, 2006c).

While the city was supportive of plans to establish a new future for this brownfield site, they did not have the resources to undertake the major infrastructural and remediation efforts necessary to do so and saw this large private investment proposal as a means to facilitate their reintegration into the city (Markowiak, 2010). IBI Group's expertise in these fields was then instrumental in the redevelopment efforts of the King-Liberty neighbourhood. They spearheaded the proposed rezoning of the area, the subdivision application to divide the area into smaller developable blocks, and proposed the density and heights for the built form which precipitated the formation of Liberty Village Urban Design Guidelines.

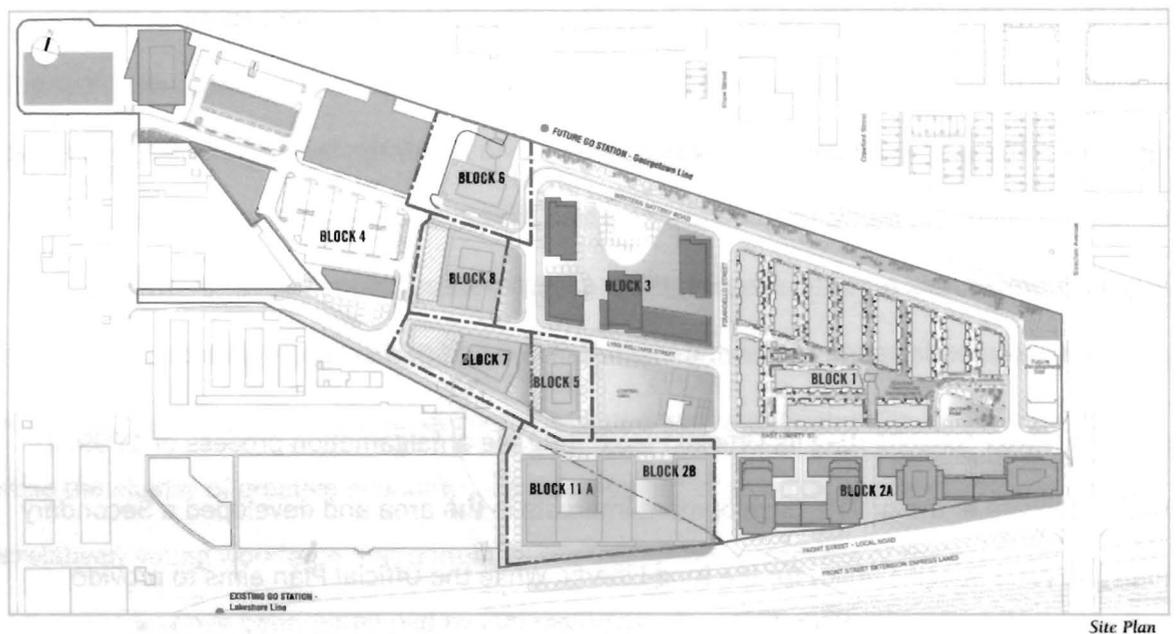


Fig. 3: King-Liberty Site Plan (Source: King Liberty Village Urban Design Guidelines, IBI Group, 2005)

These guidelines were used to clarify the urban design objectives of the official and secondary plans and assisted in the translation of policies and performance standards into a variety of three-dimensional options (IBI Group, 2005) that would allow for a profitable large-scale development. Instead of submitting development applications for each proposed project in the district, a more comprehensive approach toward the district would streamline

the approvals process and give the planning department a more solidified plan for the district as a whole (Markowiak, 2010). To a city that did not have the resources to proactively plan and prepare this site itself, this privately-led proposal was an opportunity to realize the city's goals of transforming these lands into an economically productive area, but as a result there was likely a bit "give" on the city's part when it came to approving elements of their redevelopment such as massings and height allowances (Markowiak, 2010).

Weiditz (2007) argues that the initial redevelopment of King-Liberty Village has been "municipally managed" due to the early involvement of TEDCO and use of the Employment Revitalization program and a Community Improvement Program. But while some arms of the city have had a helping hand in generating some early economic development and commercial relocations to the area, reinvestment in Liberty Village has been predominantly led by the many early private sector pioneers. The subsequent formation of the BIA then galvanized this private energy to lobby the city for incremental improvements, many of which were cost-shared in a public-private collaboration to achieve neighbourhood enhancement.

5.5 Neighbourhood Elements

The following is a basic inventory and evaluation of public amenity elements that are present or under construction in King-Liberty Village and to what degree. As this area has attracted reinvestment gradually, the provision or improvement of many of these elements has been addressed in an incremental fashion and through various collaborations between the public and private actors involved in shaping the growth and change occurring in this locale.

5.5.1 Transportation and Public Transit

One of the primary limitations of reintegrating this district back into the fabric of the surrounding city is that of physical barriers. The westward divergence of the railway confines King-Liberty Village to the south and east and the major thoroughfares of King and Dufferin provide few access points into the neighbourhood by either automobile or transit.

A constant issue raised by the LVBIA was that of increasing traffic congestion in the entirety of King-Liberty Village which is expected to intensify with limited entry and exit points and a rapidly expanding residential community. The BIA has been strongly advocating for the creation of another east-west road running along the southern boundary of the district, just north of the rail tracks that will create another entry/exit point onto Dufferin Street. This follows a similar route proposed by the ill-fated Front Street Extension, cancelled in 2008, which was aimed at providing greater access to downtown Toronto from the west. It was felt that such an addition would have supported further development of the King-Liberty Village district (City of Toronto, 2003b). The city is now in the process of completing an environmental assessment on the creation of this new local road which will likely have a similar effect on spurring additional development pressures especially along the southern boundary where conversion from industrial uses to service employment has been slower to take hold.

With regard to public transit, until recently the only routes to service the entire district were those of the often at-capacity King streetcar line and the Dufferin bus, both of which run along the bordering streets and do provide convenient access into the district itself. However, since the ongoing residential expansion of King-Liberty, the Toronto Transit Commission extended the Ossington bus into the heart of the community along East Liberty Street as of early 2009. Another possible option that would greatly improve access to and from both the commercial and residential portions of the neighbourhood is the location of a new station

along the commuter GO rail line running along the northern edge of King-Liberty Village. This is being actively pursued by both the BIA and the city planning department but the authority for this rests with the regional transportation body, Metrolinx, and thus far they have stated that they have no immediate intention of adding a station to service the area (Markowiak, 2010). While the Exhibition GO station is currently located just south of King-Liberty Village, this additional station to the north would provide improved regional access along another rail line for commuting residents and employees and likely increase investment in the area further.

5.5.2 Parks and Green Space

Planners and local businesses feel there is a general lack of green space in King-Liberty Village, especially upon considering the substantial residential intensification that is occurring. The only formal green space in the commercial district is that which surrounds Alan Lamport Stadium. While the city's Liberty Village Area Study (2006) noted that the stadium required physical improvements, there was debate as to whether it should be used as a park or redeveloped as a soccer field or hockey rink with parking, small retail and commercial uses along King Street but none of these publicly-led options has come to fruition. However, Maple Leaf Sports and Entertainment, a major private sporting events and property management company, has recently become a partner with the city in investing in the stadium. They have put up the funds to bring it up to a state of good repair and have installed a cold-weather bubble in order to make it available during the winter months as a training facility for the local professional soccer club and private leasing for sports events and leagues. In the summer the bubble is removed and the facility is used by the city for their recreational programming.

In the predominantly residential King-Liberty there are currently three relatively small parks within the area currently under intense development. A linear park along the railway to the north, a small gateway park adjacent to the entrance from Strachan Avenue and a slightly more substantial “central park” located between two of the rising condominium towers. While seemingly meager when considering that these spaces were planned for the use of several thousand new residents, the city approved the amount of proposed green space provided in the Urban Design Guidelines prepared by IBI Group. The parks department did not deem the neighbourhood to be “parks deficient” as there were ample large city parks such as Trinity-Bellwoods within what is considered to be an adequate radius (Markowiak, 2010) and, as such, the developers were not pushed to expand the amount of parks. However, the local BIA is constantly working with property owners to find ways of greening the neighbourhood as opportunities present themselves (Clay, 2010). This indicates a more privately-led lobbying approach for the city to incrementally provide community amenities such as parkland that may not have been adequately planned and required from the outset.

5.5.3 Affordable Housing

There has been no conventional affordable housing strategy for the residential developments being erected in King-Liberty. However, the city has included a clause in the 2000 Official Plan Amendment during the initial rezoning of these lands from industrial to residential that a percentage of each development must consist of low-end-of-market units (City of Toronto, 2005). While this usually simply translates into smaller bachelor units comprising a minimum percentage of available residential units—a size that will likely have little difficulty selling in these developments due to the predominantly younger area demographics—this is a common tool used by the city in order to ensure that residents with a broader range of incomes will have an option to populate the neighbourhood.

5.4.4 Community Consultation

Community involvement is a necessary part of the planning process under the Ontario Planning Act and IBI Group and the city presented a public charette of built form options for the neighbourhood during the development of the Urban Design Guidelines. However, since the residential component of the neighbourhood has been under construction, there has been little community to speak of. The demographics of the area have also played a role in lessening community engagement as younger residents who make up the vast majority of local residents in King-Liberty often tend to be far less involved in their community than older residents in more established neighbourhoods (Markowiak, 2010). A community consultation in 2005 brought in ten local residents (City of Toronto, 2005) while an example cited by the local planner was that of a community meeting scheduled to debate a rezoning application to allow two additional towers on the corner of Strachan and East Liberty at which total of three members of the community were in attendance. Such low community turn-out often works in developers' favour as much of the initial resistance they face, and that which planning departments are more apt to react to, is that which comes from local residents' concerns.

5.4.5 Built Form

Liberty Village maintains a cohesive built form and the strong traditional urban fabric has attracted many forms of adaptive reuse. There remains a large concentration of historically-significant warehouse-style buildings and the city is currently considering a heritage designation for the district (City of Toronto, 2006c). This aims to maintain its distinct character as much as to protect it from the increasing development pressures that its uniqueness stimulated in the first place.

In King-Liberty, the rezoning application submitted by IBI requested a straight forward conversion from industrial to mixed-use residential without an increase in density as it was already deemed sufficient for the future residential use at three times the lot size. The city generally allows for more flexibility in density numbers on industrially-zoned sites since industrial buildings will often be built across the entire lot whereas residential uses are required to have various setbacks from the lot lines. These setback requirements for residential developments then forced this density allowance to translate into heights taller than those that were represented in the initial proposals and models presented to the city. If a property owner is granted a specific density and the height limits don't allow for it, then it is very likely that if taken to the OMB, the height limitation will be revised upwards as opposed to lowering the density permissions (Markowiak, 2010).

A Toronto city planner focused on King-Liberty Village has stated that in retrospect planners would not have allowed the straight density conversion so as to have kept the new residential building heights in check. The planning department is of the opinion that the heights that have been reached by those developments already under construction as well as others that have been granted site plan approvals are too tall for the context of the neighbourhood (ibid, 2010). The opportunity to create the "village" in King-Liberty Village seems to have been lost in the direct translation of density into height under the provincial and municipal planning frameworks. With the continued growth of this district it appears the city has not consistently devoted the resources necessary to comprehensively plan this district effectively before development pressures have forced it into a situation of reactive planning.

While the development of the King-Liberty lands has been referred to as a comprehensive process by the developers (IBI, 2005), many of the elements that make for a successful neighbourhood remain lacking. Indeed, King-Liberty Village has demonstrated the more

entrepreneurial-style development approach (Catungal, 2009) and can be viewed as a success from a singular commercial or residential standpoint. But planners tend to agree that the area has not lived up to its potential (Markowiak, 2010, Bedford, 2010). Hume (2008) states that while there are some impressive individual buildings, their sum does not add up to that of a genuine neighbourhood. However, large parcels of this neighbourhood are still awaiting development and the area could still be considered a work in progress (Bedford, 2010).

6 East Bayfront

Long-neglected and politically fraught, plans for redeveloping Toronto's waterfront have been in some stage of planning or brief execution for decades. The federal, provincial and municipal governments formed Waterfront Toronto in 2001 in an attempt to create a single vision and coordinating body for the redevelopment these lands. This unprecedented planning and development framework is striving to create a modern, sustainable, design-driven community that will showcase a new model of city-building in Toronto (TWRC, 2005). The 54-acre East Bayfront is the first of several phases of this entire waterfront revitalization effort that is expected to span 30 years and involve billions of dollars of public and private investment.

While the public planning and preparation of this large brownfield site have required massive financial and political resources, East Bayfront will rely on private developers to build out what is planned. It will be eventually be comprised of approximately 6,300 residential units and a target of 8000 jobs in 185,800 m² of non-residential development that is proposed to be built out over a period of 15 years (City of Toronto, 2008).

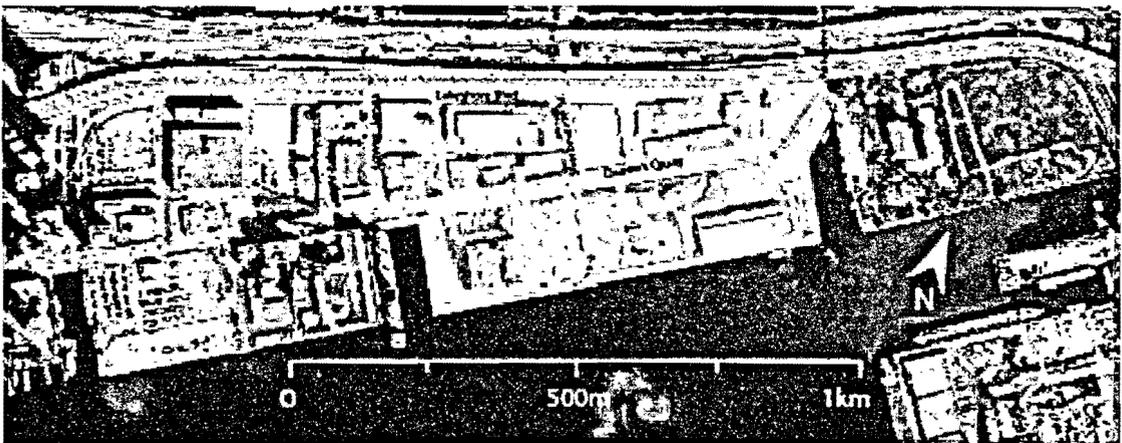


Fig. 4: East Bayfront (Source: <http://maps.google.com>)

6.1 Historical Perspective

The East Bayfront lands are located directly on Toronto's waterfront just east of the financial core. The plans encompassing this area run from the water's edge north to Lakeshore Boulevard and from Jarvis Street westward to Parliament (see Fig. 4).

Historically, the majority of Toronto's central waterfront lands have been commandeered by industry to take advantage of access to shipping routes on Lake Ontario. The railway lines then etched their route along the lake into central Toronto and through the dense manufacturing and warehousing. While the railway formed the first division of Toronto's waterfront from the city itself, the construction of the Gardiner expressway in the 1950's solidified this segregation. As the importance of access to the lake diminished, industry increasingly relocated to cheaper suburban sites and left behind both polluted lands but also the possibilities of waterfront regeneration.

There have been many plans and attempts in the past 35 years to initiate coordinated development on Toronto's waterfront but all have failed to become the impetus for high-quality development generally due to a lack of financial or political reasons or a combination of both (Bedford, 2010). The early 1970's saw the federal government invest in the creation of the cultural facilities of Harbourfront Centre. While a successful event space, its mandate to be financially self-sufficient led it to pursue private development in the 1980's. Public protests over the monolithic condominiums it produced led to a moratorium on development and Harbourfront's dismantling in 1990 (Gordon, 1997). For these reasons it was determined that a new approach toward waterfront redevelopment was necessary.

6.2 The Creation of Waterfront Toronto

Derelict central waterfront properties are often seen as an affront to civic leaders but too often local governments are simply not endowed with the necessary resources to effectively plan and execute large-scale redevelopment projects (ibid, 1997). The successful development of waterfront projects in London, New York, and Barcelona relied on a separate corporation with a strong mandate to coordinate and oversee an integrated strategy of waterfront revitalization. As such, after previously unsuccessful attempts at revitalization, these examples informed the decision that the creation of a publicly-appointed development corporation to act as a catalyzing and coordinating agency was critical to successful waterfront development (City of Toronto, 2001).

In 2001, under the *Business Corporations Act* the Toronto Waterfront Revitalization Corporation was created by the City of Toronto, the Province of Ontario and the Government of Canada tasked with planning and managing the redevelopment of Toronto's waterfront lands. Since renamed Waterfront Toronto, its mandate is to transform these districts into accessible, sustainable, mixed-use communities and dynamic public spaces. But their stated approach of attaining these goals has been one of strategic revitalization as opposed to simple redevelopment (Waterfront Toronto, 2008). This differed from typical privately-led developments such as King-Liberty in that strategic public investment in the waterfront was to not only provide long-term benefits but also specifically aimed to spark a long-term cycle of economic development through private sector investment and transform underused industrial sites into vibrant mixed-use districts (Laidley and Lehrer, 2008).

6.3 Public Policy-Led Planning

What initially allowed for the formation of these large scale comprehensive plans for East Bayfront and a singular body tasked with coordinating redevelopment was the simple fact that the majority of these lands rested under public ownership. The majority were owned by the City of Toronto or their arms-length economic development corporation, TEDCO, and have since been transferred under the stewardship of Waterfront Toronto (City of Toronto, 2006b). This condition facilitated the opportunity of the proactive policy-driven planning and development model that is currently taking place. This factor also forms a fundamental difference between the East Bayfront project and the private market-driven approach of the King-Liberty neighbourhood.

Waterfront Toronto's redevelopment plans for East Bayfront tightly align with the province's *Provincial Policy Statement* (2005) and the smart-growth inspired *Places to Grow Act* (2006) by encouraging mixed-use intensification, the reuse of brownfield sites and a "transit-first" approach toward transportation. Their inclusion of major improvements to public access to the water's edge and increasing the amount of parkland and recreational facilities as well as ambitious affordable housing goals and encouraging design excellence also relate to goals embedded within Toronto's Official Plan and Central Waterfront Secondary Plan (City of Toronto, 2007).

6.4 Detailed Comprehensive Planning

Following Waterfront Toronto's creation, planning began in earnest and started with the development of an area precinct plan. Precinct planning looks at specific areas of the

waterfront to define the location and character of public facilities and amenities such as parks, public spaces and promenades, streets and blocks, building use, form and location and transportation options. It is the final planning step before zoning by-laws are enacted and the detailed design and construction phases begin (City of Toronto, n.d.).

In setting out to achieve the highest standards of urban design for what will be one of Toronto's newest neighbourhoods, several international design competitions were held by Waterfront Toronto for the design of the various precincts and projects of the Central Waterfront. The previously mentioned policies and official and secondary plans laid the foundational guidelines under which these visions were developed. The competition for the East Bayfront yielded the winning submission from Koetter Kim Associates of Boston in 2005 and, within it, they articulated the ideals set out by Waterfront Toronto and created the East Bayfront Precinct Plan. This plan outlines development principles and guidelines at a much more detailed level than the Secondary Plan and aims to allow the city to move from Official Plan policies to Zoning By-Law provisions that will ultimately guide development (TWRC, 2005). The general shape and feel of this future neighbourhood is decided upon with this document but allows the site-specific interpretation of these built forms up to the developers and architects winning bids to design and build on individual parcels.

This examination of the many layers of policy and planning that have gone into forming the framework behind the revitalization of East Bayfront has illustrated the resources and efforts that aim to provide a more robust planning approach. It makes clear how certain guiding principles begin as broad planning and land use policies at the provincial stratum and weave their way through the subsequent levels of official and secondary plan goals, precinct plan development and eventual zoning by-law adoption. This complex and resource-heavy effort ensures a more predictable built form and more comprehensive approach toward public amenity inclusion.

However, an agency that must report to three levels of government, each with their own interests and jurisdictions, has created a complex set of mandates to fulfill under diverse political agendas (Ross, 2010). And while given much independence to develop their own plans for the East Bayfront, Waterfront Toronto must still navigate the same city approvals process as would any other planning firm or private developer. As such, Waterfront Toronto recognizes that collaboration with the city is key to making the plans for East Bayfront a reality (TWRC, 2005). It also acknowledges that true success in the development of this neighbourhood requires a balance between maximizing return on the investment made by the participation of the three orders of government with the social and sustainability objectives of waterfront revitalization (City of Toronto, 2006d) through providing an environment that will attract sustained private development investment.

6.5 Financing Tools

It was realized early on that attracting initial private non-residential development to East Bayfront could prove difficult due to several factors. In addition to being a brownfield site requiring soil remediation, there is an extreme lack of amenities to cater to potential businesses and workers, a relatively long walking distance from the commuter hub Union Station with no transit links yet in place as well as the “down-market” image of the area and perceived safety concerns (City of Toronto, 2008). Due to the strategic nature of waterfront revitalization, these initial locational challenges prompted the city and the Province to implement a Community Improvement Plan (CIP) for East Bayfront. A CIP designation gives an area priority status for receiving municipal financial assistance to help achieve physical improvements to the neighbourhood and is intended to encourage private sector investment. This designation permitted the implementation of Tax Increment Financing (TIF) and is the first such pilot project in Toronto, seen as a unique tool to support development of this area.

Through this public financing program, the Province and the city will contribute part of the growth in property taxes resulting from the waterfront development projects back into funding for infrastructure and other public improvements (ibid, 2008) to help spur continued private investment.

6.6 Market Forces

Due to the predominant public ownership and strategic nature of the East Bayfront lands, this revitalization initiative is more strongly driven by the aforementioned policy initiatives and less so by profit margins for residential and commercial space. The market is still a key consideration as private developers will not execute the plans for this district if their projects are not profitable due to market conditions. This has a greater effect in determining the length of time it will take to complete this revitalization effort and less on the shape it will take (Ross, 2010). This is an example of strong planning efforts leading the market to achieve collective goals. Allowing policy instead of profit to direct planning and redevelopment efforts from the start is a rare opportunity especially on lands with such a prime waterfront location. If these lands were privately developed, the city would have likely been pushed to maximize densities in order to increase profits (ibid, 2010) which would have likely resulted in a less predictable built form than outlined that in the comprehensive precinct plan just as had occurred in Harbourfront's publicly-ridiculed attempts at developing the central waterfront in the 1990's (Laidley and Lehrer, 2009).

But creating an environment with such predictability has required a \$1.5 billion investment by three levels of government in this case. It has also taken upwards of seven years to create the proactive and comprehensive planning framework behind it while the phased build out of the entire precinct is expected to take an additional eight years (City of Toronto, 2006d).

They are also aware, however, that because they are funded by government sources they have the luxury of not having to react to immediate economic circumstances as do market driven redevelopment plans (Ross, 2010). Having a stable stream of funding from the three levels of government and a long-term planning horizon allows Waterfront Toronto to look at the broader vision and ride out moments when private investment weakens during economic cycles. While market health will have an effect on how quickly parcels will be privately developed, the inclusion of public amenities and design standards contained within the precinct plan and associated zoning by-law are assured. Strong policy direction and such an extended timeline allow Waterfront Toronto to look beyond a market downturn and keeps them from having to make quick, reactionary decisions that could sacrifice meeting the greater public policy objectives of the project (ibid, 2010).

6.7 Selection of Development Partners

Waterfront Toronto is a fairly unique entity in that they do not play the singular role of planning agency or developer but rather a coordinating agency that partially assumes some of the roles of both players and acts as an intermediary between them. One of the primary undertakings of a developer on an unserviced site is that of providing the necessary infrastructure on which to erect their project. In the case of East Bayfront however, Waterfront Toronto is undertaking this phased soil remediation and infrastructure initiative in order to create initial value in the precinct and provide a fully-serviced environment that is ripe to attract high-quality development teams (Ross, 2010). It aims to provide the necessary public infrastructure to leverage future private sector investment in the East Bayfront (City of Toronto, 2007d).

Upon the completion of infrastructure works for specific blocks of future development, a unique and stringent process begins to select developers for the individual blocks. This process consists of two stages. First is a Request for Qualifications (RFQ), which will review initial submissions for experience, financial standing, design team, and vision for the development and related criteria relevant to Waterfront Toronto's objectives. This is then followed by a Request for Proposals (RFP) requiring comprehensive submissions detailing all aspects of the financial and business plan, concept design and related aspects of the proposal (East Bayfront Business Summary, n.d). These components are then evaluated by members of Waterfront Toronto based on their comprehensive inclusion of elements mandated by zoning by-laws as well as their design innovation. This exercise allows room for only those capable of meeting the high expectations set by Waterfront Toronto for each developable parcel in East Bayfront and substantially raises the likelihood of achieving the design excellence they have set as one of their guiding principles for this redevelopment project.

6.8 Neighbourhood Elements

The majority of elements in this inventory and evaluation of East Bayfront have been assessed from planning documents and the local Precinct Plan as construction has just begun on the initial components. The comprehensive vision for this district has been in development for eight years and will require at least a further seven years to reach full build out (Ross, 2010).

6.8.1 Transportation and Public Transit

Currently the only major artery to pass through the East Bayfront lands is that of Queen's Quay. The precinct plan lays out a new street structure that mimics a traditional grid pattern which will link the new neighbourhood to the major north-south roads of Jarvis Street to the west, Sherbourne Street and finally Parliament Street at the eastern boundary. A progressively more finely-grained network of neighbourhood streets and service lanes are clearly laid out around planned development blocks so as to maximize connectivity and minimize traffic congestion.

Queens Quay is intended to be the primary transportation corridor for East Bayfront and to serve as the multi-modal "main street" of the community. It has been meticulously designed so as to accommodate two lanes of automobile traffic in both directions as well as a dedicated light rail transit (LRT) route, cycling lanes and generous pedestrian realms larger than the city standard (TWRC, 2005). These elements support the city's Central Waterfront Secondary Plan's goals of supporting pedestrians, cycling and transit while minimizing automobile use. The LRT line is the major element of Waterfront Toronto's "transit-first" approach toward transportation in the neighbourhood with every residential unit being located no more than a five minute walk from a transit stop (Ross, 2010). However, they are aware that implementation of the transit service that is an integral part of this neighbourhood relies on the ongoing partnership with the Toronto Transit Commission.

6.8.2 Parks and Green Space

One of the primary elements of the East Bayfront Precinct Plan is the inclusion of parkland. A system of larger public parks and inner-block green spaces will comprise fully 30 percent of the overall land area (TWRC, 2005). The two most significant additions, Sugar Beach and Sherbourne Park, have both won international landscape design competitions to locate in

East Bayfront. The latter of these two is a 1.5 hectare landscaped space currently under construction running from the northern boundary of the neighbourhood to the water's edge in a triangular pattern so as to maintain the view corridor, and the city's connection, to the lake. It is intended to become an amenity for local residents and workers as well as destination for all Torontonians (Waterfront Toronto, n.d.).

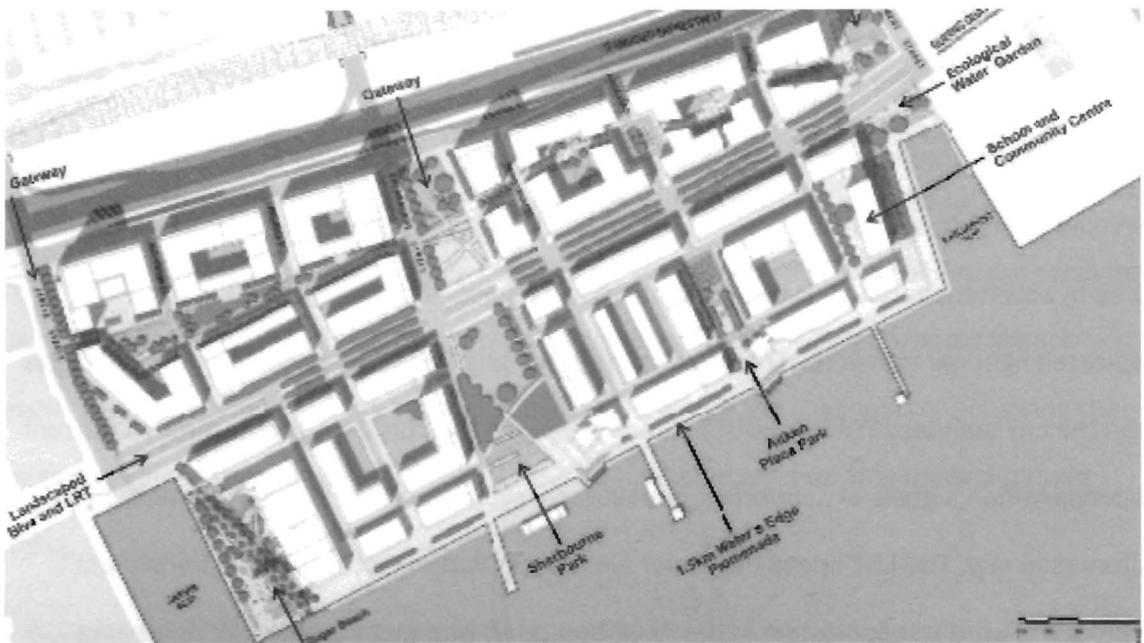


Fig. 5: East Bayfront Parks and Greenspace Map (East Bayfront Precinct Plan, Waterfront Toronto, 2005)

6.8.3 Affordable Housing

Waterfront Toronto has stated from the outset that affordable housing options are an integral part of their redevelopment efforts of East Bayfront and ambitious goals have been set so as to produce a more diverse and inclusive neighbourhood. Of the planned 6300 residential units, twenty percent are designated as affordable rental units and another five percent as low-end-of-market. Waterfront Toronto determined that twenty percent struck a balance between an increased supply of affordable housing and that of ensuring waterfront

development is economically viable for the private developers involved (Waterfront Toronto, n.d.).

These affordable housing goals are incorporated directly into the zoning by-laws that govern development on these lands. According to development analysts with Waterfront Toronto, these by-laws will be used from the outset to ensure the inclusion of affordable housing units on waterfront lands. Requirements are set out in both the requests for proposal (RFP) that developers originally respond to upon determining interest in proposing a project for a development parcel as well as in the final development agreements. Mandating the inclusion of affordable housing from the very beginning of the planning and development process ensures that it cannot be a promised but undelivered element as is far too often the case for many other planned projects throughout Toronto (Ross, 2010).

In addition to creating formidable affordable housing targets and the mechanisms to reach them, a wide array of community services are planned for the new neighbourhood based on demographic projections. These include one new public school, two daycare facilities and one major community recreation centre (TWRC, 2005) to sufficiently service the diverse incoming population.

6.8.4 Community Consultation

As this redevelopment has been strongly publicly-driven, one of the pillars of the planning process behind the East Bayfront Precinct Plan was that of community consultation. It was viewed as a collaborative effort with the City of Toronto, community stakeholder groups, private landowners, school boards and the Toronto Transit Commission. This was an iterative effort that spanned almost two years and resulted in several adjustments to many elements within the first proposal (TWRC, 2005). Building heights were lowered at several key

locations, green space was expanded and flexibility was incorporated into the built-from guidelines (ibid, 2005). And despite the fact that this was a sparsely used industrial area hundreds were often in attendance for the public forums as this redevelopment effort has been viewed as a critical part of Toronto's waterfront revitalization efforts and will attract residents from across the city and region (Ross, 2010).

6.8.5 Sustainability Initiatives

One of the true advantages of a comprehensive planning approach is that of having the opportunity to integrate sustainable infrastructure and building requirements into the planning and implementation process. This opportunity has not been lost on Waterfront Toronto as it sees this redevelopment as a chance to incorporate new public policy at both the provincial and municipal levels to produce a community that is both a national and global model for sustainability (TWRC, 2005). All development to occur on the publicly-owned lands must include a variety of stringent sustainable initiatives including attaining Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Gold certification, incorporating green roofs and relying on Waterfront Toronto's progressive district energy system. All buildings are also mandated to be designed and constructed by teams that have demonstrated experience in creating high-performance green buildings (Waterfront Toronto, 2008).

In addition, East Bayfront is currently one of a limited number of LEED Neighbourhood Development (ND) pilot projects. This certification grew out of the LEED building certification program and is designed to certify exemplary development projects that perform well in terms of smart growth, urbanism, and green building and is designed primarily for the

planning and development of new, green neighbourhoods (Congress for the New Urbanism, 2009).

6.8.6 Built Form and Design Excellence

Both the prime urban waterfront location and the sheer magnitude of the overall redevelopment have piqued the interest of some of the biggest international players in planning, architecture, landscape architecture and engineering (Ross, 2010). The projects have also been tendered in such a way to attract more of the same caliber. What also makes these endeavours so attractive to large international development and architectural teams is the fact that the preliminary planning that has gone into the East Bayfront Precinct Plan is so detailed that development teams are very aware of the expectations and the process.

This differs from the traditional development approvals approach of being more regulatory and less policy-based in nature. Waterfront Toronto's framework forges partnerships with the private sector developers it selects and grants contracts based on design excellence. These partnerships are established from the beginning of an individual project and Waterfront Toronto helps to guide the selected team through the design and development process in order to ensure it meets the strict criteria of its Precinct Plan as well as all necessary city approvals (Ross, 2010). This proactive approach greatly diminishes the possibility of costly delays throughout the redevelopment process and therefore minimizes the risk of each private development team, a key consideration for any development project.

With such a well-developed Precinct Plan and high expectations for every project that comes under Waterfront Toronto's guidance, one can wonder how much room these development and architecture teams will have to incorporate their vision into Waterfront Toronto's. They are, in fact, given ample room to express their individual vision for each parcel of East

Bayfront. Waterfront Toronto recognizes it is their experience and excellence in what they do is what won them the opportunity to work on such a prominent site. The development parameters of each development parcel have been made very clear and these firms then figure out how to deliver a real estate product of their own design with their own expertise (Ross, 2010). However, one final layer of quality and design control rests in the formation of a design review panel, one of only four operating in the City of Toronto. While this body makes professional recommendations only and their input has no legally binding effect on the designs, this review process does reinforce the importance Waterfront Toronto places on high quality design and strongly encourages developers to let the design elements outlined in the Precinct Plan guide them (City of Toronto, 2007d).

The length and the deliberate nature of this ongoing process indicate the strong desire for this massive revitalization project to be planned properly from the outset. “The principles of this plan will act as a framework for the renewal activities and will be as valid 30 years from now as they are today” (City of Toronto, 2003). In a city that has had many hopes and seen many grand plans to realize the vast potential of its waterfront but few results, this represents a committed desire to succeed from vision, to planning, to execution.

7 Findings

The two case studies presented here share several fundamental characteristics. Both are comparably sized, centrally-located former industrial lands that have begun their redevelopment efforts at roughly the same time. Both are brownfields that have required remediation and the installment or improvement of infrastructural elements before the projects could begin realization and the lands reintegrated into the urban fabric of the city that surrounds them. But as this research progressed, it has become increasingly clear that there are far more differences than parallels between the actors involved in the process and the frameworks under which they have operated which are resulting in some key differences in these new neighbourhoods as they continue to be constructed.

7.1 Land Ownership

Land ownership is the most significant factor in determining what goals will be set and development process implemented for a given site (Kirk, 1980). The Ontario Planning Act provides a framework under which a balancing act occurs between private and public interests of how land is developed. All development applications, regardless of who holds the land title, must navigate this process in the same fashion. However, when land is privately held, there are limitations as to how much influence a public planning department can have in shaping the priorities of such a development. Government land use policies must be adhered to but the city is often in a more defensive position in attempting to ensure certain public amenities.

The ongoing development of King-Liberty is rooted in the regulatory approvals process which uses zoning by-laws and Section 37 density bonusing agreements to define specific trade-offs and is much more indicative of the process by which most private lands are redeveloped

in Toronto (Bedford, 2010). Private proposals are submitted and planners and developers then engage in negotiating the inclusion and form of project elements until a mutually acceptable outcome is determined and approvals are granted. When lands are held by public institutions, public policy more can hold far more sway in the guiding principles of the development. Public ownership does not necessarily guarantee a better outcome for a community but it does set the stage for public policy and development priorities to more closely align and allows an opportunity for a more comprehensive approach toward planning in the public interest. The fact that the majority of lands comprising the East Bayfront rested in public hands permitted the creation of the public body Waterfront Toronto and a development framework that has made public amenities such as public transit, affordable housing and abundant green spaces more robust priorities with tools in place to ensure their inclusion.

7.3 Financing Brownfield Remediation and Infrastructure

Site preparation and adequate infrastructure are necessary precursors to any urban development. They can also be two of the more complex and costly elements of a redevelopment project. Infrastructure is a collective good, but those paying for its installment are more likely to have influence over its content to their own advantage (Hopkins, 2001). However, local governments in Canada simply do not have the financial resources to either remediate the sites themselves and, consequently, can rarely undertake remediation of brownfield sites in urban centres without the involvement of the private sector (De Souza, 2000) as is the case in King-Liberty. The partnership between IBI and CanAlfa allowed them to jointly remediate the lands, plan the development and build the infrastructure necessary to support their comprehensive development proposal. This project was also large enough in scale so as to allow privately-funded remediation to become a feasible option.

In the case of East Bayfront, massive infrastructural investment is being carried out publicly both due to the fact that the lands rest in public hands and, more importantly, because this project has been deemed to be of an intensely strategic nature by all levels of government. Economic development goals and political dividends can be realized by creating the environment in which a showpiece public policy-driven revitalization project can be executed. In addition, more innovative financial tools have been introduced for this project also due to its perceived strategic importance. The Waterfront Community Improvement Plan allows for municipal financial incentives to spur brownfield remediation and economic development through specific grants as well as Tax Increment Financing, a relatively new tool used in Ontario municipalities (Municipal Affairs and Housing, n.d.). Waterfront Toronto has been able to act ahead of market demand and absorb many of the initial risks associated with the redevelopment of brownfield lands which can provide a far greater public influence on how lands are designed and developed (Sagalyn, 1997) as well as what public amenities are included.

7.4 Planning and Development Framework

King-Liberty's redevelopment can be viewed as private interests with public guidance. It was predominantly an undertaking by a private partnership in which lands were assembled, rezoning applications filed, plans drawn up, soils remediated, infrastructure installed and development proposals all submitted by private entities. While the under-resourced city planning department was included to some degree in shaping and approving these plans, this was likely done more to ensure a speedy approvals process and economically reactivate these lands than to greatly enhance public goals (Markowiak, 2010). The collaboration of private companies with various specialized skill sets, IBI Group and CanAlfa, joined in this

instance in order to present a unified approach to the large-scale physical and economic development with the public sphere playing a regulatory role.

The framework for the redevelopment of East Bayfront is based on public interest with private execution. The public ownership of the lands gave the public sector infinitely more control on how they will be developed. Due to the understood significance of how these lands were planned a separate body was created, Waterfront Toronto, to facilitate and oversee the redevelopment of these lands with strong public mandates to create superior urban communities. However, they still needed to partner with private developers to build out the planned precincts. Waterfront Toronto's decision to carry out the soil remediation and install the necessary infrastructure itself was done so as to create a fully-serviced urban canvas on which to begin private development. The award-winning detailed precinct plan and supporting zoning by-laws have then laid out a stable and predictable foundation upon which top developer/architect teams may bid on erecting their individual visions for this new neighbourhood. Waterfront Toronto is not selling the land so much as a development opportunity. But this is an opportunity with complex responsibilities attached to it that include building design and performance standards as well as the provision of a host of public amenities.

7.5 Public Participation

The Planning Act mandates public participation in the planning process but the degree to which the public is actually engaged with each project is highly variable. In the case of King-Liberty Village, charettes and several public meetings regarding development applications were very sparsely attended despite the fact that many of the original proposed tower heights have been exceeded. This is in part due to the locational isolation of the area which

is separated from neighbouring communities by rail lines both to the north and the south. In addition, the district is a brownfield redevelopment and does not have a strong pre-existing residential component and, thus, strong local organization around common concerns. In such cases development issues can more easily be framed or ignored by private sector developers if the city is not persuaded by the public and has too few resources to proactively plan the district themselves (Markowiak, 2010). This could also be interpreted as landowner approval of the planning process which is very likely since the vast majority of lands in King-Liberty were owned by the same private partnership that developed the Urban Design Guidelines and is directing the majority of new development in the area.

However, East Bayfront also shares this lack of a local residential history yet its public forums have been held more often and have been consistently well attended (Ross, 2010). The increased frequency of these public meeting is due to the fact that the politics of public lands and public funds demand ample public participation. But the considerably higher public attendance is likely due to the central waterfront location and perceived importance of these lands which have garnered a much wider audience. Just as waterfront revitalization is considered a strategic investment by three levels of government, citizens from across the city see this revitalization project as an opportunity to create a new neighbourhood that not only services the local residents but is a destination for the city as a whole. In addition, the comprehensive visionary nature of this plan is one that more easily attracts the interest of more residents than other, more conventional developments.

7.6 Market Forces

Private land tends to be put into the most profitable use since the overriding criterion for private development is profitability (Kirk, 1980). Planners need to understand this fact

otherwise community plans will tend not to shape market behaviour, but be shaped by it (Adams, 1994). But it must be recognized that the implementation of land use policy is also contingent upon the fact that there need to be development proposals to plan. A buoyant real estate market can provide planners with a greater number of opportunities to push for the inclusion of public urban amenities such as those investigated in these projects. Public amenities become the “returns” that cities can realize from private development within the planning framework (Sagalyn, 1997).

However, a strong market producing an influx in development applications can strain planning departments’ resources and result in weakened ability to fight for public the public interest especially when many such negotiations can end up at the Ontario Municipal Board. A reality of planning in Ontario with private developers and negotiating for the inclusion of stronger neighbourhood components is too often “what can you win [at the OMB], not what should be done” (Markowiak, 2010).

Privately-held lands in a central location with a strong local commercial and residential real estate market provided the conditions for the adaptive reuse, infrastructure installment and redevelopment of King-Liberty Village to take place with few public resources. The continued buoyancy of the central Toronto condominium market has allowed this redevelopment to proceed relatively uninterrupted into the last third of its fifteen year planning and development timeline.

This contrasts with the historical lack of private redevelopment interest in East Bayfront due to its locational challenges of isolation and lack of amenities and the need of large infrastructural investments. As a result, it was determined that public involvement was necessary to create the initial conditions needed to attract future private investment, and especially of the caliber targeted by Waterfront Toronto. The organization is in the process of creating local market demand by absorbing many of the initial risks associated with the

redevelopment of brownfield lands lacking in physical urban infrastructure. Healthy public funding has also permitted them the luxury of being relatively insulated from a number of the market constraints that guide other privately-led redevelopment schemes such as King-Liberty and often lead to minimized public amenities in the name of cost-effectiveness. Not having to immediately maximize revenues has allowed a detailed framework to evolve for East Bayfront that is focused on ensuring neighbourhood elements of the public interest are guaranteed to be included in the eventual private sector proposals for the individual parcels.

7.7 Proactive and Reactive Planning

As these case studies have made clear, different approaches toward planning set the stage for manifestations of differing priorities. Waterfront Toronto's comprehensively proactive style of planning takes far greater public resources but allows room for integrating elements of successful modern communities more fully. Incremental reactive improvements to traffic conditions and transit are helping make Liberty Village more accessible but these create frustration for residents and businesses as they are reacting after the demand is already there as opposed to planning for it before substantial growth occurs. In addition, while reusing urban brownfields represents a far more sustainable approach toward urban intensification, far more comprehensive sustainability initiatives such as district energy have been able to be introduced to East Bayfront from the outset.

Liberty Village has shown that certain areas of the city can and will find new incarnations as private sector entrepreneurialism constantly finds new pockets in which to invest. And it will do so with little initial help of the municipal government, especially under buoyant market conditions. King-Liberty Village may be considered a success simply due to the fact that once contaminated industrial lands are now becoming home to a creative industry cluster and

thousands of new residents. But community and city amenities such as parkland and affordable housing have been far better represented and integrated into the comprehensive plans developed by Waterfront Toronto for East Bayfront.

Fanstein (1989) feels planning can often play reactive catch-up to the economic development targets that a city has set for itself. This appears to ring very true today in the case of the redevelopment of King-Liberty Village. Various economic development arms of the city invested some of the first small catalysts into the employment area that attracted commercial tenants and began to regenerate long lost economic growth. Yet when this economic expansion began to require physical improvements to its locale and the support of the city planning department, the resources were few. It seems in this instance we may have invested too much in the notion of economic growth and too little in how best to manage to consequences of this growth. This could be seen as a failure in anticipating the need for planning. In order to maximize the effect of successful planning, planning agencies need to act ahead of market demand (Hopkins, 2001) or at least have a solid foundation of area studies on neighbourhoods that will likely experience intense development pressures in the near future.

The sheer amount of resources, both financial and political, that have been allocated to Waterfront Toronto in order to proactively plan and begin execution of the East Bayfront's revitalization are unprecedented in modern Toronto. Billions of dollars spread out over a 30-year horizon and political backing from all three levels of government are almost unheard of for a Canadian planning exercise. These lands have been deemed strategically worthy of massive resources due to their public ownership, prime waterfront location and possibilities for publicly-guided economic development (Laidley and Lehrer, 2009). The creation of such a publically-robust framework with aims of becoming an international showpiece neighbourhood is incredibly rare and would be grossly unrealistic to set as an example for

how other, even comparably-sized tracts of land, can often expect to be planned and developed. But it has clearly illustrated that a more proactive approach toward publicly planning lesser endowed neighbourhoods will likely result in more abundant and better integrated public amenities.

8 Recommendations

As public policy continues to encourage urban growth boundaries to limit sprawl and promote the intensification of well-serviced parts of the city, the redevelopment of centrally-located brownfields will continue to become more common. However, their reintegration into the urban fabric is a consistently complicated undertaking and one requiring substantial resources, public or private. This research has illustrated some key considerations to improve the likelihood that similar redevelopment initiatives will be well-planned and adequately serviced with public amenities.

8.1 Maintain Ownership of Public Lands

The most significant determinant in setting goals for a redevelopment project can be traced to land ownership. Government-owned lands present an opportunity to allow public policy to more strongly shape the core components of a project and provide a chance to comprehensively plan in the public interest as the example of East Bayfront as illustrated. When lands are privately-owned planners must enter into heavy negotiations surrounding suitable built form standards and the inclusion public amenities with the constant possibility of an OMB hearing. Those lands that are currently in public possession should remain so while strategic sites should be sought out by the city when possible.

8.2 Anticipate Areas of Growth

Detailed area studies should be carried out for districts that are expected to experience rapid growth or redevelopment pressures in advance of granting development approvals. When such studies are executed after substantial growth as begun, it is more difficult to influence

its direction and the inclusion key components that will adequately support current and future residents. Effectively anticipating where growth will occur will allow for a more proactive planning stance and increase the chances of the successful integration of key urban elements such as green space and public transit from the outset.

8.3 Planning and Economic Development Partnering

Economic development is one of the most important objectives of many city governments. But, as witnessed in Liberty Village, there are often tensions between economic development efforts and allotting the necessary planning resources to then manage the effects of attracting private investment. Adequate planning resources should be paired with areas that are being assisted through economic development initiatives. These two entities should work and plan in tandem in order to initiate growth and simultaneously create the necessary municipal support to manage it successfully over time.

8.4 Greater Public Planning Resources

Effective proactive planning requires adequate human and financial resources. While the vast public investment in Waterfront Toronto and its plans for East Bayfront may be an unrealistic standard for other less strategic endeavours, it has highlighted what can be accomplished with more robust planning assets. As population growth and intensification continue in Toronto into the foreseeable future, private development applications will assuredly rise and so, too, will the planning resources necessary to adequately manage this growth. Development review should not be confused with comprehensive proactive planning which concerns itself with understanding the interdependent nature of the elements that

make for healthy and vibrant communities. Strong public influence is needed to ensure that they are consistently planned with the public interest in mind.

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